

below
the
surface
an in-depth
look at...



Doing Business with the District

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The South Florida Water Management District purchases goods and services from vendors throughout the state and the nation.

These procurements are held to high industry standards and are governed by the agency's commitment to quality, cost effectiveness, efficiency, and fairness in a competitive arena.

The South Florida Water Management District is the largest of five regional water management districts in the state of Florida. We are charged with managing and protecting the water resources in a 16-county area extending from Orlando in central Florida, south to Key West. Our main office is located 15 minutes from downtown West Palm Beach. Around 1800 people are employed throughout our service area, which includes seven field stations, 49 pump stations, and nine service centers.



Inherent in the District mission is our responsibility to provide water quality, water supply, flood control, and the protection of natural systems for people living in the region. We accomplish our mission through many diverse activities that support our role in managing our region's water resources. These include operations and maintenance, land acquisition and management, planning and research, community and government relations, regulation, and construction.



Procurement Thresholds

Standard

Less than \$50,000: No competition

\$50,000 – \$150,000: Three written quotes required

More than \$150,000: Formal competition

Construction

Less than \$50,000: No competition

\$50,000 – \$500,000: Three written quotes required

More than \$500,000: Formal competition

Office Leases

Less than 5,000 Sq. Ft.:
No competition

Formal competition requires submission of a Request for Bids (RFB) or Request for Proposals (RFP). Contracts are awarded to the responsive/responsible bidder (RFB/lowest price) or respondent (RFP/most advantageous proposal).



Helping Us Meet Our Goals

We rely on businesses to supply goods and services of every nature and description to help us successfully complete District initiatives and meet our goals. Needed services run the gamut, anything from remote data collection, to dredging, to janitorial services, to property leasing, to spillway construction. The number and type of commodities we purchase are endless: auto parts, lab equipment, fencing, mowers, computer software, and paper supplies are just a few.

The District takes pride in its efforts to continually seek out willing and able contractors, and we encourage all segments of the business community to look for opportunities to do business with the District by participating in the agency's procurement process.

Procurement Thresholds and Categories

General procurements represent the majority of the District's procurement needs. These purchases are categorized by procurement threshold amounts as shown at the left.

Finding Business Opportunities

To optimize chances for finding business opportunities, we invite you to join in the District's business loop. First, you can learn about current solicitations by viewing our web site or by calling the Bid Hotline. Information is frequently updated.

Additionally, all formal solicitations over \$150,000 are announced in at least one newspaper with local distribution in the county where the work will actually be performed. Every effort is made to publish notices in a manner that encourages responses from all segments of the business community. For example, if the work will be performed in Miami-Dade County public notices will be placed in a newspaper of general circulation as well as at least one minority newspaper.

Becoming a Registered Vendor

Vendors who feel they may be able to supply needed services and commodities should become registered with the District by forwarding a completed Business Registration Application to our agency. Forms are available online and can be returned through email; or, they can be downloaded and sent by fax to our Procurement Department.

Awarding Contracts through Competition

All standard procurements over \$150,000 and construction procurements over \$500,000 require formal solicitation and Governing Board approval of the final award. Competition through the use of a Request for Bids, or RFB solicitation, results in an award based solely on price and price-related factors. Use of a Request for Proposals, or RFP solicitation, results in an award based on an evaluation, or integrated assessment of each proposal. For an RFP, final selection of a contractor involves conditions other than price. In either case, the contractor must meet the requirements for responsiveness and responsibility as described below:

Responsiveness. Bids are publicly opened and reviewed to determine whether they conform to the instructions and requirements of the solicitation, including bonding, insurance, and licensing requirements.

Responsibility. District staff conduct a review to assess whether the apparent low bidder has the capability to perform the work in all respects and the integrity and reliability to ensure good faith performance.

To find bid results, business owners can go to the "Solicitations Preliminary Results" page on the District's web site or call the Bid Hotline. Preliminary results for RFBs are posted within two working days from the time solicitations are opened. After final review and tabulation, an official Notice of Intent to Award is posted for seventy-two hours. Contract awards to successful bidders generally occur within ten business days from the time the submitted bids are opened. For RFPs, the posting of an "Authorization to Enter into



The District's Procurement Department fulfills its mission by establishing contractual relationships to support District programs, projects, and operations.

Negotiations" is made following completion of the evaluation process. Contract awards for successful proposals may take approximately four to eight weeks depending on the number of proposals received, the duration of the evaluation, and whether presentations are required.

Other Ways to Participate in District Business

As part of the District's mission to promote water conservation, the District also offers grants to those entities willing to develop cost-effective, safe and appropriate alternative water supplies. Using alternative water resources can greatly offset the growing demand on our natural supplies of freshwater.

Applying for a grant is straightforward. If the proposed project meets the grant requirements, the applicant should follow these simple steps:

- 1) To request an application, contact 561-682-6391, fax a request to 561-681-6275. For technical assistance or help completing the form, contact Jane Bucca at 561-682-6791, or email jbucca@sfwmd.gov
- 2) Submit the application on or before the deadline stated in the application. The closing date is generally the first week in April of each year.

3) A letter will be sent from the District notifying you of eligibility and listing any concerns or questions staff may have about the project.

Tips on Becoming a Successful Vendor

Businesses can take some very important steps to increase chances for becoming a successful vendor. After carefully reviewing the solicitation, contractors should:

- check to see that all solicitation requirements are being met and all requested information is being provided,
- make sure the submittal is received by the District before the bid or proposal deadline.

Small business and MBE firms should also be diligent in seeking out business relationships. Firms interested in finding opportunities should:

- review solicitations on the District's Hotline that call for services or commodities the firm can provide,
- download applicable solicitations, plan holders lists, and pre-bid attendee lists from the District's web site, and contact these firms to establish working relationships prior to upcoming projects.

While there are no guarantees for receiving work from the District, carrying out sound business practices can set the

The District upholds its commitment to ensure that the community we contract with reflects the community we serve. We do this by cultivating opportunities for businesses in an atmosphere that is creative, legal, and fair.



stage for future business relationships. Once the firm is registered, the best way to remain in the loop is to stay informed about District opportunities and network with other firms within the community.

The District proactively supports its customer base by hosting workshops and other outreach events. These activities are generally publicized in local newspapers and are listed on the agency's web site. They offer excellent networking opportunities. We also participate in trade fairs targeting small businesses and minority business enterprises.

Supporting the Fundamentals of Good Conduct

We are entrusted with full responsibility to provide fair and equal opportunity for the sharing of business opportunities. We engage in a procurement planning process that maximizes competition while satisfying the needs of the District in the most effective, economical, and timely manner. Planning is a team effort that includes staff professionals from Project Management, Procurement, the Office of Counsel, Budget, and Risk Management.

Our procurement policy perpetuates an ideal that supports the fundamentals of good conduct and incorporates good faith business principles. The District affirms a commitment to:

- follow accepted public procurement practices,
- conduct business with integrity,
- ensure open and fair competition,
- meet the need for quality products and services,
- adhere to competitive bidding principles relative to cost and timely delivery, and maintain the public trust.

Let's Do Business!

Call us, send a fax, or visit our web site. We want to do business with the community we serve.

Bid Hotline:	1-800-472-5290
Fax Number:	1-561-681-6275
Equity in Contracting:	1-561-682-2147
Procurement:	1-561-682-6391
Web Site Address:	www.sfwmd.gov



DID YOU KNOW?

- The procurement team consists of all participants in the process, including not only District program and project representatives and procurement staff, but also the contractors who provide the products and services.
- Procurements over \$150,000 require formal solicitation procedures (through a Request for Bids and/or a Request for Proposals) and approval by the District's Governing Board before source selection and award of the contract is made.
- In a request for proposal (RFP) performance factors may outweigh cost factors. Therefore, a contract may be awarded to a firm that is determined to be the most advantageous, all factors considered and detailed in the solicitation document.
- All contracts, purchase orders, and supporting documentation are subject to periodic audits by the District Inspector General's office, and contract files are subject to public inspection in accordance with Florida's Public Records Law.

The South Florida Water Management District is a regional, governmental agency that oversees the water resources in the southern half of the state. It is the oldest and largest of the state's five water management districts.

Our Mission is to manage and protect water resources of the region by balancing and improving water quality, flood control, natural systems, and water supply.

This "Below the Surface" publication on Doing Business with the District directly supports all elements of the District's mission.



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